1957

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GENERAL DEPARTMENT

REFUGEES

G P22/124

72

FROM P. Q.
Mr. John Hall.

No. 97.
Dated Feb. 4th
Received in Registry—
6 FEB 1957

To ask the S. of S. for F.A. what is the number of Hungarian refugees and British refugees from Egypt now in this country; and what amounts have been contributed by H.M.G., to date for the Hungarian Refugee Relief Fund and the Anglo-Egyptian Refugee Relief Fund, respectively.

References to former relevant papers

MINUTES

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(Print)

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(Dft) Mr. Paice H.O.
for Mr. Ritchie.
Jan. 21st.

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References to later relevant papers

45075

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN ON THIS PAGE

1 Northern
2. African

73

Parliamentary Question

Home Dept

~~*97~~ 152 **Mr. John Hall:** To ask the Secretary of State for ~~Foreign Affairs~~, what is the number of Hungarian refugees and British refugees from Egypt now in this country; and what amounts have been contributed by Her Majesty's Government, to date, for the Hungarian Refugee Relief Fund and the Anglo-Egyptian Refugee Relief Fund, respectively. ¶

U. Wycombe

4 FEB 1957

ANSWERED 4 FEB 1957
REPLY ATTACHED.

GP22/124

Mr. Paice has agreed that H.S. will answer this question. I have told Mr. Rae. Mr Paice has asked for our figures of financial aid for Hungarian Relief and refugees. I have drafted.

21/1

(26)

Mr Rae

23/1
(J.F. WEARING)

18 JAN 1957

Refugees

152. **Mr. John Hall** asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department the number of Hungarian refugees and British refugees from Egypt now in this country; and what amounts have been contributed by Her Majesty's Government, to date, for the Hungarian Refugee Relief Fund and the Anglo-Egyptian Refugee Relief Fund, respectively.

Mr. R. A. Butler: The numbers are about 17,500 and 4,000 respectively. As regards the second part of the Question, I would refer my hon. Friend to the reply which I gave to my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Haltemprice (Major Wall) on 31st January.

CONFIDENTIAL

REFUGEES

BRIEF for the United Kingdom Delegation to the Standing Programme Sub-Committee and the Executive Committee of the United Nations Refugee Emergency Fund.

(Fourth Session)

Documents

Flag A. 1) Report on the Third Session of the UNREF Executive Committee (A/Ac. 79/41)

Flag B. 2) Report by the U.K. Delegation on the Third Session of the Executive Committee (I.O.C. (56) 44) .

Flag C. 3) High Commissioner's Progress Report for the period to September 30 1956 (A/Ac. 79/48) .

Flags D, E. 4) UNREF Revised Plan of Operations (1957) (A/Ac 79/45, A/Ac 79/46).

Flag F. 5) Plan of Administrative Expenditure for 1957 (A/Ac. 79 / PSC/R. 21) and Corrigendum No. 1.

Para 13.

Flag G. 6) Chinese Refugees in Hongkong (A/Ac 79/47).

Background

2. The Third Session of the UNREF Executive Committee was held in May 1956. At that time the outlook for the Fund's income for 1956 was poor indeed. In fact the year closed with the Fund in a rather better position than had been expected, due mainly to the special Swedish contribution

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of 7,000,000 kronor ($ 1,353,180) and additional contributions made by other Governments. The anticipated shortfall of 3½ million dollars on the 1956 target of $ 6 million dollars will be considerably reduced, perhaps to one million dollars.

3. However, the financial prospects for 1957, clearly a critical year in the High Commissioner's Four-Year Programme, are by no means rosy. The Swedish Government's special contribution will not be repeated and it is too early to estimate what may be the financial impact on the Programme of the Hungarian refugee problem. The year 1957 is likely to prove the most costly as many building projects mature and every effort will have to be made to use the Fund's income in the most economical and productive fashion. The final year of the programme will give little opportunity for catching up on wastage of time or money.

Objectives

4. The main objectives are, then, to ensure that individual projects are likely to benefit refugees in the most economical way; and ensure, so far as possible, their integration or resettlement by the end of 1958. Whatever the future of refugee arrangements after that date, it is desirable that the Four-Year Programme should come to an end with as few projects left half-finished as possible. A further, and equally important objective is to ensure that the position of the Hungarian refugees vis-à-vis the main programme is settled by the Fifth Session of

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the Executive Committee in May 1957 or, failing that, that recommendations on this problem are ready for the Economic and Social Council this summer. If, as seems likely, upwards of 50,000 Hungarian refugees in Austria have to be brought into the Four-Year Programme, the 1957 and 1958 estimates will be considerably affected; to what extent will depend largely on the use to which the U. N. Secretary-General's Fund for Hungarian Refugees will be put.

Instructions to U. K. Delegate

Election of Officers. (Item 1.)

5. This is left to the U.K. Delegate's discretion.

Adoption of the Agenda. (Item 2)

6. No comment.

Report on the Fourth Session of the Standing Programme Sub-Committee. (Item 3)

7. This Brief is intended to cover both meetings of the Programme Sub-Committee and of the Executive Committee.

U N R E F Progress Report. (Item 4.)

Flag C

8. The High Commissioner's latest report, which shows that up to the end of September last only 21,000 refugees had benefited from the programme in 1955 and 1956 and about 6,000 had been firmly resettled, emphasises the need for a major effort in 1957. Paragraph 130 of the report draws attention to the difficulties encountered in implementing building projects in Germany. The U.K.delegate

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should, preferably outside the Committee, point out to the High Commissioner's Office and the German delegation that the position of refugees in Germany interests many people and organisations in this country and both the High Commissioner's Office and the German authorities may be adversely criticised if the Programme in Germany continues to be held up by administrative difficulties. The U.K. Delegate should make it clear that H.M.G. fully understand that many difficulties are inevitable in developing building projects. But it will be difficult for H.M.G. to convince members of the British public that such difficulties cannot be overcome once funds have been made available.

9. In Austria the situation seems to be better on the whole, although the report does show that the Volksdeutsche tend to benefit more than the foreign refugees. In view of Austria's present position as host to thousands of Hungarian refugees, the U.K. Delegate should not criticise this position as the shorter integration period required by the Volksdeutsche assists the Austrian Government in their present difficulties. The U.K. Delegate should, however, express the hope that the ratio between assistance given to foreign refugees and to the Volksdeutsche can be maintained.

10. Paragraph 198 of the High Commissioner's report records difficulties experienced in coordination between his office and the Greek Government. The U.K. Delegate should consult the High Commissioner on the question whether he would wish any supporting statement to be made on

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this point.

11. If the question of admitting European refugees from China is discussed under this item or any other the U.K. Delegate should, if required to make a statement, say that in view of the large intake of Hungarian refugees H.M.G. are unable to consider the admission of any other groups into the U.K. at present.

Financial Statements of U N R E F for 1956 (Item 5)

12. These statements have not yet been received. While it is recognised that the High Commissioner's Office has been working under full pressure, the U.K. Delegate should once again point out that there is little value in discussing accounts if they are not available for scrutiny before the meeting. The U. K. Delegate should in any case bring to the notice of the High Commissioner the fact that in Schedule A of the 1955 accounts the United Kingdom is recorded as having pledged $ 56,000 but as not having paid it by 31 December 1955. This might give the impression that the U.K. had gone back on its undertaking in respect of 1955. This schedule should have included a note explaining why the balance of the U.K.'s contribution was not paid during that year.

Flag H.

Revised Plan of Operations (1957)

13. The United Kingdom will contribute £100,000 to U N R E F in 1957 under the same conditions laid down in 1955 and 1956, viz. That £20,000 of this sum will be payable only if total Governmental contributions to U N R E F reach

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the figure of $ 3.25 million. The U.K. Delegate may announce this as soon as it has been announced in Parliament. It is hoped that this can be arranged on January 23 and the Delegation will be informed accordingly. The £20,000 matching contribution for 1956 has been paid by H.M.G.

14. Document A/Ac 79/45 seeks the Executive Committee's approval for the carry-over into 1957 from 1956 of $ 3,607,363 (Paragraph 44). The U.K. Delegate should agree to this proposal and to other similar proposals made in Paragraphs 66, 88, 96, 101, 113, 119, 129 of the Document. Flag D.

15. Reference is made in Para (vi) of Document A/Ac. 79/46 to the High Commissioner's review of the impact of the shortfall of contributions on the Programme up to the end of 1958. The U.K. Delegate should press for the revision of this document as suggested by the High Commissioner. Flag E.

16. Paragraph (xii) of the same document recommends that some discretion be given to the High Commissioner's office to suspend or cancel between sessions of the Committee projects whose implementation will clearly be delayed. This is likely to evoke considerable discussion by the delegates of the "host" countries and it is not proposed to give the U.K. Delegate firm instructions on the point. The U.K. Delegate should be guided by H.M.G.'s general view that everything possible should be done this year to cut out administrative delays and should endeavour to promote a formula which would enable the High Commissioner to get on with alternative projects when it is

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clearly desirable to do so, without altogether prejudicing the Committee's terms of reference. If it proves impossible to work out such a formula the U.K. Delegate might, at her discretion and in consultation with the High Commissioner, suggest that the latter be authorised to seek the agreement, between sessions of the Committee, of only the Governments directly concerned, consulting other representatives only if those Governments are unable to agree.

17. The proposal in Paragraph 413 that U N R E F should now contribute towards the cost of the office in Hongkong, borne so far by I.C.E.M., can be agreed to by the U.K. Delegate. When the Shanghai office of UNREF was functioning UNREF and ICEM ran joint offices in both places with UNREF meeting the full cost of the Shanghai office.

18. The U.K. Delegate is given discretion to vote for the proposal in Paragraph 462, adjusting priorities for housing projects in Germany and Austria.

Plan of Administrative Expenditure for 1957
(Item 7.)

Flag F.

19. The U.K. Delegate may agree to the increase of $ 36,730 in the 1957 estimates so long as discussion on this point makes it clear that the increase is justified by the needs of the Programme.

/ Negotiation of loans etc

Negotiation of loans and guarantees to finance projects. (Item 8.)

20. No document has so far been received on this subject but it is assumed that this is the question discussed previously at the Third Session of the Committee, when the Executive Committee proposed an addition to Rule 81 of the Financial Rules which would have permitted the High Commissioner to incur initial commitments for projects against contributions which had been pledged but not paid. The Secretary-General referred the addition to the Advisory Committee on Administration and Budgetary questions who revised it to restrict such committments to 80 per cent of the total amount of contributions not yet received, and added the condition that the total amount of monies in the Fund must always be sufficient to meet the total payments due at any given time. H.M.G. advised the High Commissioner at that time that they agreed to the revised wording. Flag K.

21. H.M.G.'s attitude on the whole question was set out in the Brief for the Third Session of the Committee. The U.K. Delegate should refer for instructions on any new points.

Problem of Refugees from Hungary (Item 9)

22. Since the first Hungarian refugees arrived in Austria the High Commissioner's Office has figured prominently in the operation, although the statute of the office might suggest, if narrowly interpreted, that these refugees are not eligible for the High Commissioner's assistance. Para. 6A (ii) of the Statute defines refugees as persons who

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became such as the result of events occurring before January 1, 1951. It is unlikely that the point will be discussed at the Executive Committee as the High Commissioner has obviously the best machinery to deal with the Hungarian refugee problem. If the point should be raised the U.K. Delegate should, if required to state H.M.G.'s position, argue that the recent events in Hungary are a consequence of the seizure of power by the Communists in 1948 and that therefore the refugees are eligible under the High Commissioner's statute.

23. The U.K. Delegate should summarise for the Committee H.M.G.'s efforts to date on behalf of Hungarian refugees. The whole U.K. effort may be summarised as follows :

Contributions from Public Funds

(a)	Contribution to Austrian Government's Fund.	£ 20,000
(b)	Contribution to Secretary-General's Fund for Hungarian relief.	£ 15,000
(c)	Contribution to Secretary-General's Fund for Hungarian Refugees.	£ 15,000
(d)	Grant to British Council for Aid to Refugees.	£ 10,000
(e)	Grants to British Red Cross Society.	£ 50,000
(f)	Transport charges in respect of (e)	£ 15,000
(g)	U.K.Element in Council of Europe Grant.	£ 18,000
++ (h)	Grants to I.C.E.M.	£ 40,000
	++ Not yet paid.	£ 183,000

/ British voluntary funds...

British voluntary funds have been readily subscribed to by the British public. The following are the figures for the principal appeals as at January 16 :

Lord Mayor's Fund.	£ 2,117,000
British Red Cross Appeal.	377,800
United Nations Association.	70,000
Save the Children Fund.	102,000
	£ 2,666,800

24. The Lord Mayor has sent a total of £150,000 to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner. Many other voluntary efforts have been made, including the raising of a fund to provide for the education of Hungarian students arriving in this country.

25. Up to January 6 over 14,000 Hungarian refugees had arrived in the United Kingdom. The admission of a further 5,000 is expected to begin about January 21. The basic cost of maintaining the refugees now in the United Kingdom has been roughly estimated at £1 million during the first six months. This will be defrayed from the Lord Mayor's fund, but there will certainly be a residual charge on H.M.G. including provision for such items as education, health and social services.

26. The United Kingdom Delegate should make it clear that H.M.G. thoroughly sympathise with the Austrian Government's difficulties and pay tribute to the manner in which they have been tackled.

/ Chinese Refugees ....

Chinese Refugees in Hongkong. (Item 9.)

27. The U.K. Government's position is set out in Paragraphs 21 - 27 of Document A/Ac 79/47.

Flag .... Nothing need be added to that statement but the U.K. Delegate should oppose any proposal to earmark funds for schemes directly connected with Formosa or involving the "repatriation" of refugees to that island. Any funds allocated should be used by the U.N.R.E.F. Office in Hongkong in consultation with the Governor. The U.K. Delegate should abstain from any vote on the allocation of funds to Hongkong.

28. On the question of eligibility the U.K. Delegate need only state that as H.M.G. recognise duly the PekingGovernment as the Government of China, they regard the refugees as eligible under the High Commissioner's Statute

Appointment of Dr. Lindt as High Commissioner.

29. The U.K. Delegate should take an early opportunity of expressing H.M.G.'s pleasure at the appointment of Dr. Lindt as High Commissioner and informing him privately that when he finds time to visit London he will be very welcome at the Foreign Office.

+Oc.
Please type out paragraph 23 of enclosed p.p.

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Registry No. GP22/60.

Top Secret
~~Secret~~
Confidential.
~~Restricted.~~
~~Open.~~

Draft.

K.B. Paice
E89.

Aliens Branch
Home Office.

From
K.G. Ritchie

Para 23 of attached.

Reference our telephone conversation today about the Parliamentary Question put down down by Mr. John Hall (No 97) on the subject of HMG's assistance to Hungarian refugees and British evacuees from Egypt, I am enclosing a statement of ~~U.K.~~ contributions from the U.K. ~~public funds~~ Exchequer to the various ~~of the~~ funds, ~~This~~ as contained in our brief for the Refugee Fund meetings.

Items (d) and (h) are of course ~~on the~~ being charged to the Home Office vote. ~~The~~ Item (f) is the approximate cost

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

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cost of ferrying supplies to Austria by British military aircraft. Item (g), an "involuntary" contribution, arose when the Council of Europe voted surplus budget funds (to which Italy had contributed 18%) to the value of nearly 100 million francs to assist those refugees. The money has been paid over to the Austrian Government.

~~Thus~~ HL 21/1

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN IN THIS MARGIN.

(GP 22/60)

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

CONFIDENTIAL

January 21, 1957

Dear Paice

Reference our telephone conversation today about the Parliamentary Question put down by Mr. John Hall (No. 97) on the subject of Her Majesty's Government's assistance to Hungarian refugees and British evacuees from Egypt, I am enclosing a statement of contributions from the United Kingdom Exchequer to the various funds, as contained in our brief for the Refugee Fund meetings.

Items (d) and (h) are of course being charged to the Home Office Vote. Item (f) is the approximate cost of ferrying supplies to Austria by British Military aircraft. Item (g), an "involuntary" contribution, arose when the Council of Europe voted surplus budget funds (to which Her Majesty's Government had contributed 18%) to the value of nearly 100 million francs to assist these refugees. The money has been paid over to the Austrian Government.

Yours ever

Sgd (K.G. Ritchie)

K. B. Paice, Esq.,
Aliens Branch,
Home Office.

Parliamentary question from John Wall MP: number of Hungarian refugees, and UK refugees from Egypt now in UK, and amount of UK contributions to Hungarian Refugee Relief Fund and Anglo-Egyptian Refugee Relief Fund. 4 Feb. 1957. MS Refugee Records from the General Correspondence Files of the Political Departments of the Foreign Office, Record Group 371, 1947-1970 FO 371/127704/22/124. The National Archives (Kew, United Kingdom). Refugees, Relief, and Resettlement, link.gale.com/apps/doc/ICEQRY270254123/RRRW?u=omni&sid=bookmark-RRRW&pg=1. Accessed 12 Apr. 2024.